Saml & Sarah May
Feb. 15. 1851

Boston, ~~Leicester,~~ February 15. 1851.

My dear Sir,

It seems perfectly idle to say, in these days of cheap letter communication (though all 'decent' folks want it cheaper yet), that I wait for *an* opportunity to write to you; and yet, we often *do* wait for such an opportunity, nevertheless, and feel there is a more especial call to write when immediate friends are passing between us, than at other times. I am very glad you are, at length, to have a visit from Mr Thompson, and heartily wish, both for his sake and yours, that he were in better health and more able to do a vigorous and effective work than he is; for I greatly fear he will break down among you. He has been overworked here. Incessant applications, which his kind feelings have not allowed him to refuse, have poured in upon him. And poor Garrison now is so unwell, that - at this present writing - it seems he will be kept from you entirely. He has hemorrhoids very ~~so~~ badly, & very painfully to himself, and has been confined 2 or 3 days to his house with them. But we hope he will be able to be with you. We have all felt an interest in having both him and Mrs. Garrison go on this little jaunt together, and make their long-contemplated visit to you and your family.

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I wish that Wendell Phillips could join them, and spend a fortnight or so in your region. But he has never done such a thing, since I have known him. He is a most devoted man to the care and comfort of a sick wife. He will not go more than a short day's journey from her, and that not often.

I returned yesterday from a week's stay at Leicester. I went for a less time, but a violent cold seized me, and made me for about 3 days down sick. My wife, Russell, and our little Bessie were all severely affected, and I left the last quite reluctantly, for she was far from well. Sarah & Ade are desirous to be remembered to and by you all, as you will perceive from the accompanying little parcel. I have added to it a couple of copies of the Annual Report.

We were brought up to think that we lived in an enlightened and Christian land. But how miserably mistaken and befooled we were! Where could we go to find such heathenism, such immorality, such confusion worse confounded of all ideas of right and sentiments of justice, as are now taught in nearly all the pulpits and leading secular and religious (!!) papers of the country? I think Orville Dewey ought to be branded - have a parti-coloured, state-prison, garb put on him, and a mark set in his forehead, as a man more dangerous to society and to the morals of the young people of the land than all the inmates of your Auburn & Sing sing put together. The devilish doctrines set forth - I will not say supported, so rotten is their foundation - in his Mercantile Library lecture, and re-iterated in his Pittsfield Speech are - I can only say again - just *devilish*. My heart is not forgiving nor good enough not to *wish* - which I do unqualifiedly - that he might be compelled to test and prove his love for this Union, by going into a tobacco field, or some similar or worse employment, as a slave, until he learned to feel for the bodily and mental woes of the millions who have worn, & are wearing, out whole lives there. Thank GOD, few of *them* the slaves - are so degraded & vile as Orville Dewey. And yet he does but emit the same poisonous breath that comes from almost every quarter. The whole Nation seems to be given over, to believe a lie. And they hug and cherish it, fall down and pray to it, crawl on their bellies and sue for favour from it, and seem never so well content as when they have found a depth, lower & filthier than their neighbours, in which to wallow before the hideous idol of their worship. Here and there - *raro nantes in gurgite vasto* - loom up the heads of a few honest men. The sermons of Leonard Withington, Nathl. Hall Jr, Mr. Whitcomb, and a few others – besides those of Th. Parker, J. G. Forman & others already known to you, are just enough to keep it from being said that the New England Pulpit is ~~is~~ ~~[illegible]~~ hopelessly and forever lost, and self surrendered to the Devil.

We have had another Fugitive Case today in Boston. Very slyly and quietly Deputy Marshal Patrick Riley and some wretched tools of his seized a clever young man, ~~known~~ called here 'Frederick', head-waiter at Taft's Cornhill Coffee house, & bore him off in his white apron & shirt-sleeves (the morning not being cold) to the Court room, before Commissioner Geo. T. Curtis – a puppy of a fellow who was wearing baby-clothes a few years ago, & now affects more bigness and owlish gravity than would suffice for a whole bench of old judges. – There appeared those excellent men, Saml E. Sewall and Ellis Gray Loring – the slaves of this country will have cause to bless them thro' eternity – and argued strongly for a postponement of the case, which the Commissioner at length decided to grant, until Tuesday. Mister Deputy Riley then directed all spectators to retire, which after a while they did – as far as the entries & stair-cases. About an hour afterwards, when said Riley was about to remove his prisoner from the Court room, a body of resolute colored men pushed their way in, took Riley's sword away from him, & 'Frederick' out of the hands of the officers, & bore him off in triumph!

Wasn't this grand? Maybe these stupid 'niggers', who can't take care of themselves, will be discovered to be quite smart one of these days. – Love to all. – Yrs. S. May Jr.